Mbusa (preparation in the forest). The women who have gone to the forest cut the flexible branches of the trees (mienge). Then they fashion a sort of termite's nest in which they hide a handful of musuku leaves. A pole is passed through the nest [illegible]. The pole supporting the termite's nest is carried by two women who sing a song in honor of the fiancée: "Mu luendo lulia lwine batebera Na chisungu chifinga cha nkuni." The children also carry bundles of firewood on their backs, after the nakalamba has first annointed them with the red dye of nkula. Then they all come back singing: "Nshimba mulya ya ngombe." The children take up the chorus: "Ngombe isho we ulele, ngombe isho kufula kocho... ." 881

Mbusa (arrival at the village). After returning to the village, they unload the clay and bundles of wood in the hut. The clay will serve to make the fireplace. In this special fireplace, lit with a fresh fire, the famous highly seasoned dish for the wedding is cooked, the namushinwa, consisting of beans, sorghum (millet), chick-peas, lentils, tubers and peas, vegetable marrow and castor. They sing: "Natukalabe Babisa, baleto ku kalaba." [262]

Mbusa (matrimonial symbols). The women put down the white clayey earth, treading it down with charcoal and the red dye of nkula. They put all of it down near the hearth. [386]

The female director of the ceremony /nachimbusa/ then brings in two baskets filled with earthenware mbusa made a long time ago and always used for the same purpose. Please note that the nachimbusa is a sort of priestess whose office is hereditary. It is her job to preside at wedding ceremonies. The mbusa which she uses represent wedding symbols and have various shapes. I was able to purchase some of these mbusa by paying a great deal. Some are shaped like bi-sexual dolls, others are shaped like small vases with spiney walls, yet others resemble flower vases, certain others look like animals, one in the form of a big snail which emits a sound resembling a lion's roar. Once the ceremony /215/ is over, the nachimbusa takes home her mbusa. When she dies, they are buried with her in her grave. During her whole life she carefully hides them in termite nests or under rocks in the river-bed. Here are the names of the various mbusa according to their form or use: chiluwe, chimundu, chimingi posa masamba, chilyobe wa ngoma, mwansa 881 793 [323 532] 552 881

chipepe, mulume wa ngala, chilombo, mangalawila, mwikala chishasha, wingeminino utepauka. 552 ● 551

This is how they proceed. The nachimbusa puts down a large mbusa made of baked clay. It has two paws and is funnel-shaped at the apex; this is the chimundu (big lion). On top of the mbusa she twists flexible tree branches /mienge/ into a circle, then coating them with earth /maloba/ and giving it the shape of a lion. In the upper cavity she places tufts of plants to imitate the mane; the teeth and eyes are imitated by artistically inserted pumpkin and melon seeds. When it is finished, two women come close, imitating the roar of a lion with special mbusa; the meaning of this is to instruct the future husband as follows: "You, if you abandon your wife and if you go alone to the river, you will be caught by the lion" /Iwe nga ukalalekeresha mukashi, waya ku ifwe eke, ukasumwa ne nkalamo/. Please note here that none of these matrimonial symbols is meant to be immoral. Their purpose is to instruct the future spouses in their duties as husband and wife, to give them courage to cope with the everyday dangers of life in the bush, to incite them to stand up courageously to the difficult tasks to which both of them will be bound. 552 551

Nkuni (firewood). In the course of the day, the women have notified the husband to go and get firewood in the forest. He ties a package /chifunda/ containing a small live rat /kapanga mutuntuni/ to his bundle /chifinga/. This is a sign that his fiancée has not yet slandered him. If he knows that his fiancée has already spoken ill of him, he will not put a rat in the bundle. During this time the women end their mbusa ceremonies. 881

The fiancé is invited. At this time the singing starts and the drums beat more loudly; the women call the fiancé with the following words: "Kalombo, musha, uko uire teba, taulabwela." The fiancé will thereupon appear carrying the bundle of wood on his back. He is accompanied by his sister or a female cousin. As both enter the hut, and the bundle of wood is /216/ put down, and dancing in the young girl's honor begins, the nakalamba (i.e. the woman who has invited the neighbors to the celebration) unties the bundle of wood and the package. She then takes two chickens; the fiancée sits on one of them in order to kill it /kufwantikisha/, while the nachimbusa sits on the other. Once the chickens have died they are plucked and cooked.